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AUTHOR
Edington, Everett D., Comp.; Musselman, Jane, Comp.

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ABSTRACT Abstracts are included of the major papers presented at a working conference focusing on successful educational programs and dissemination of practices. Three papers describe the rural setting by examining the education of American Indian youth, educational systems in the rural South, and change in rural areas. A paper on change gives suggestions for implementing innovations in rural area schools. Three major topics comprise the problem-defining and problem-solving sections: (1) preparation of rural youth for the world of work; (2) political aspects of small communities; and (3) quality instruction in rural schools. Discussion by representatives of government agencies are included in each section. Recommendations are proposed for improving education in rural areas. The conference program, lists of speakers and participants, brief descriptions of innovative practices, and evaluation of the conference are contained. (JAM)

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PROCEEDINGS OF A NATIONAL WORKING CONFERENCE ON SOLVING EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS IN SPARSELY POPULATED AREAS

Compiled by
Everett D. Edington
and
Jane Musselman

June 1969

Sponsored by
NATIONAL FEDERATION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF RURAL EDUCATION
and
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER CLEARINGHOUSE ON RURAL EDUCATION AND SMALL SCHOOLS

AA 000 354

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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PROCEEDINGS OF A NATIONAL WORKING CONFERENCE ON SOLVING EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS IN SPARSELY POPULATED AREAS

March 17-19, 1969
Denver, Colorado

Sponsored by

NATIONAL FEDERATION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT
OF RURAL EDUCATION

and

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER
CLEARINGHOUSE ON RURAL EDUCATION AND SMALL SCHOOLS

June 1969

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
II.	CONFERENCE PROGRAM	3
III.	CONFERENCE SPEAKERS	5
IV.	CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS	7
V.	DEMONSTRATIONS OF PROMISING PRACTICES FOR SOLVING RURAL SCHOOL PROBLEMS	12
VI.	THE RURAL SETTING	19
	The Northwest American Indian After High School* Alphonse D. Selinger	20
	Economic and Sociological Factors Affecting Education Systems in the Rural South* Paul E. Kelly	23
	The Changing Rural Scene* Edward O. Moe	26
VII.	CHANGE IN SMALL SCHOOLS* Everett M. Rogers	29
VIII.	EDUCATING RURAL YOUTH FOR SUCCESS IN THE WORLD OF WORK	35
	Rural Education and the Educational and Occupational Attainments of Youth* Archibald O. Haller	36
	The Problem As I See It* Francis A. Gregory	38
	A Proposed Strategy for an Attack on the Problem of Educating Rural Youth for the World of Work	41
IX.	IMPROVING OPPORTUNITIES IN RURAL COMMUNITIES	44
	The Political Aspects of Small Town and Rural Schools* Frieda L. Gehlen	45
	The Problem As I See It* Henry Taylor	48
X.	PROVIDING QUALITY INSTRUCTION IN SMALL RURAL SCHOOLS	50
	The Problem As I See It William Ward and Alden Lilliewhite	51

How May the Problem of Providing Quality Instruction Be Attacked In Small Rural Schools? 51

XI. RECOMMENDATIONS 53

A Sample Problem Sub-Area Solution Strategy: "How Do We Enhance the Rural Child's Self-Image in the World of Work?" 54

Suggestions for Improving Education in Rural Schools By Improving the Teacher 55

Suggestions from the Floor 56

XII. STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES* George R. Bandy 57

*Abstract

INTRODUCTION

Education in sparsely populated areas of the nation encounters unique problems due to long distances involved as well as small numbers of students. Research and various innovative approaches to these problems have indicated techniques which can be utilized to provide better educational programs for rural youth. This conference attempted to focus on successful programs and to disseminate the practices to others. Sponsored jointly by the National Federation for the Improvement of Rural Education (NFIRE) and the Educational Resources Information Center Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools (ERIC/CRESS), the workshop was an example of how governmental and professional organizations can cooperate in the dissemination of new methods and research findings.

In order for participants to have a common acquaintance with problems and characteristics of education in rural areas the first session of the workshop consisted of three papers defining The Rural School Setting. The banquet session featured a speech entitled Change in Small Schools, which provided suggestions for implementing innovations in rural area schools. During the second day, three separate sessions were held simultaneously. One session included a paper given by a sociologist on the particular problem area of occupational attainments of rural youth. A paper given in another session focused on political aspects of small communities. Each paper was followed by an analysis of the problem by a representative of a Department of the U.S. Government. The third of the three sessions was comprised of two speeches giving viewpoints of the U.S. Office of Education and a regional educational laboratory. At a later session, small Task Forces met to define specific problems and to propose solutions to those problems.

On the third day the entire workshop reconvened to hear and evaluate the proposed solutions. A recapitulation of change strategies and an evaluation of the conference concluded the workshop.

Copies of the conference proceedings are available for $1.00 each from Rowan Stutz, President, National Federation for the Improvement of Rural Education, Utah State Board of Education, 136 East South Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111.

Abstracts of papers presented at the conference are included in this publication. Full texts of most papers will be available in both microfiche and hardcopy after abstracts of the papers appear in a future issue of Research in Education (RIE), ERIC's monthly announcement journal of research and resource documents. Yearly subscription rates for RIE are $21.00 (domestic) and $26.25 (foreign); RIE may be ordered from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools
P.O. Box 3AP, New Mexico State University
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88001

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CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Monday, March 17

Afternoon:

12:00-1:30 Registration

1:30-3:20 General Session, Rowan Stutz presiding
Greetings, Byron Hansford
Conference Overview
The Rural School Setting--Indian Reservations, Al Selinger
The Rural School Setting--Rural South, Paul E. Kelly

3:20-3:35 Break

3:35-5:00 General Session, Continued
The Rural Setting--General, Ed Moe
Synthesis Panel, Felix Robb, Russell Merrell and Miriam Carliner

Evening:

7:00-9:00 Banquet Session, Ed Hildebrand presiding
Change in Small Schools, Everett Rogers

Tuesday, March 18

Morning:

9:00-10:00 General Session, Everett Edington presiding
The Problem Solving Approach to Rural School Improvement--An Application, Jeff Eastmond

10:00-10:15 Break

10:15-12:30 Problem Solving Sessions

Section A--Educating Rural Youth for Success in the World of Work, John Codwell, chairman
Rural Education and the Educational and Occupational Attainments of Youth, Archibald Haller
The Problem As I See It, Francis Gregory
Discussion--How May This Problem Be Attacked in the Small Rural School?

Section B--Improving Opportunities in Rural Communities, Charles Bitters, chairman
The Political Aspects of Small Towns and Rural Schools, Frieda Gehlen
The Problem As I See It, Henry Taylor
Discussion--How May the Problem Be Attacked in the Small Rural School?

Section C--Providing Quality Instruction in Small Rural Schools, Walter Hartenberger, chairman
The Problem As I See It, William Ward and Alden Lilliewhite
Discussion--How May the Problem Be Attacked in the Small Rural School?

12:30-2:00 Lunch

Afternoon:

2:00-5:00 Demonstrations of Promising Practices for Solving Rural School Problems
(Repeated every hour)

Evening:

5:00-7:00 Dinner

7:00-8:00 Demonstrations, Continued

8:00-10:00 Problem Solving Task Forces Meet to Develop a Proposed Selected Solution Strategy

Wednesday, March 19

Morning:

9:00-10:30 General Session, Charles Haggerty presiding
Proposed Solution from Task Force A Presented and Evaluated, John Codwell
Proposed Solution from Task Force B Presented, Charles Bitters

10:30-10:45 Break

10:45-12:15 General Session, Continued
Presentation from Task Force B Evaluated
Proposed Solution from Task Force C Presented and Evaluated, Walter Hartenberger

12:15-1:30 Lunch

Afternoon:

1:30-3:00 General Session, Rowan Stutz presiding
Strategies for Change in Rural Communities, George Bandy

3:00-3:30 Conference Evaluation and Future Plans, Frank Darnell

3:30 Adjournment

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

Dr. George BANDY
Dean of Education, Northern Montana College

Mr. Charles BITTERS
Assistant Director, Region XV Education Center, San Angelo, Texas

Mr. Miriam CARLINER
Development Branch, Title I Programs, Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Office of Education

Dr. John E. CODWELL
Associate Director, Education Improvement Project, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

Mr. Frank DARNELL
Director, Alaska Rural School Project, University of Alaska

Dr. Jeff EASTMOND
President, Worldwide Education Institute

Dr. Everett D. EDINGTON
Director, ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, New Mexico State University

Dr. Frieda GEHLEN
Assistant Professor of Sociology, Purdue University

Mr. Francis GREGORY
Special Assistant to the Associate Manpower Administrator, U.S. Department of Labor

Mr. Charles HAGGERTY
Coordinator, Oregon Small Schools Program, Oregon State Department of Education

Dr. Archibald HALLER
Professor of Rural Sociology, University of Wisconsin

Dr. Byron HANSFORD
Commissioner of Education, State of Colorado

Mr. Walter HARTENBERGER
Program for Improving Instruction in Small Schools, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

Dr. Ed HILDEBRAND
Colorado State Director, Western States Small Schools Project

Dr. Paul KELLY
Head, Department of Educational Sociology, University of Georgia

Dr. Alden LILLIEWHITE
Deputy Commissioner, Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Office of Education

Mr. Russell MERRELL
Utah State Director, Western States Small Schools Project

Dr. Ed MOE
Professor of Sociology and Executive Director of the Division of Community and Urban Development, University of Utah

Dr. Felix ROBB
Director, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

Dr. Everett ROGERS
Professor of Communications, Michigan State University

Dr. Al SELINGER
Research Associate, Oregon State University

Mr. Rowan STUTZ
Administrator, Division of Research and Innovation, Utah State Board of Education

Mr. Henry TAYLOR
Program Assistant to the Administrator of the Rural Community Development Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Dr. William WARD
Director, Development Division
Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

ABBOTT, L. E.
Pikes Peak Board of Coop. Serv.
1118 W. Cheyenne Rd.
Colorado Springs, Co. 80906

AGNEW, Donald C.
So. Assn. of Colleges & Schools
795 Peachtree St., N.E.
Atlanta, Ga. 30308

AILTS, Bernard L.
Southwest & West Central Educ.
Research & Devel. Cncl.
Southwest Minnesota State College
Marshall, Mn. 56258

ALLRED, E. Malcomb
Box Elder County Sch. Dist.
Brigham City, Ut. 84032

ANDERSON, David N.
Virgin Valley Schools
Mesquite, Nv. 89024

ANDERSON, Merlin D.
Nevada Director, WSSSP
Dept. of Educ.
Carson City, Nv. 89701

ARCHULETA, Julio C.
Mancos School Dist. Re-6
P.O. Box 428
Mancos, Co. 81328

ARMSTRONG, Milton
Dorris Elementary Sch. Dist.
Box 197
Dorris, Ca. 96052

BAKER, Harley
Happy Valley School
Rt. #2, Box 5131
Anderson, Ca. 96007

BERGETH, Robert
Bureau of Educ. Research
Univ. of North Dakota
Grand Forks, N.D. 58201

BILBREY, Willie Hugh
Title I Director
Overton County Board of Educ.
112 Bussell St.
Livingston, Tn. 38570

BIRKELAND, E. Dale
Northwest Minnesota Educ.
Research & Devel. Council
and Indian Sch. Dist. #630
Red Lake Falls, Mn. 56750

BLUETT, Tom B.
CESA--#3
Gillett, Wisconsin 54124

BOND, Mrs. Ruth Allen
Wheeler County REIP
Wheeler County Schools
Alamo, Ga. 30411

BOYLES, Robert
Gilliam & Wheeler County
Intermediate Educ. Dist.
Condon, Or. 97823

BREIMO, Don E.
Dept. of Education
State-Operated Schools
Anchorage, Ak. 99502

CAMPBELL, John W.
Weston School District 19-R
Weston, Or. 97886

CARMICHAEL, Dale
Texas Small Schools Project
201 E. 11th St., Capitol Station
Austin, Tx. 78711

CARNIE, Dr. George
Exemplary Learning Center
Hagerman, Id. 83332

CLARK, A. B.
Alamo, Ga. 30411

CLARK, Victor
SW & W Cent. Ed. R&D Cncl.
Southwest Minnesota State College
Marshall, Mn. 56258

CLARK, William S.
Wheeler County Schools
Alamo, Ga. 30411

CLARKE, Michael J.
Virgin Valley Schools
Mesquite, Nv. 89024

COLE, Norman I.
Special Educ. Consultant
Minnesota State Dept. of Educ.
Indian School Dist. #630
Red Lake Falls, Mn. 56750

CORNFORTH, Dr. Keith
WN-REC
Winnemucca, Nv. 89445

CYR, Frank W.
Rural Supplementary Education Center
Stamford, N.Y. 12167

DAME, Colleen
Dept. of Education
State-Operated Schools
Anchorage, Ak. 99502

DAVIS, Lee
Superintendent of Instruction
Overton County Bo. of Educ.
112 Bussell St.
Livingston, Tn. 38570

DELANEY, Dr. John
Catskill Area School Study Cncl.
State Univ. College
Oneonta, N.Y. 13820

DICKEY, Lucille
Oregon Small Schools Program
Public Service Building
Salem, Or. 97301

DIGNEO, Ellen H.
College of Santa Fe
Santa Fe, N.M. 87501

DUNN, Dale E.
WN-REC
Lovelock, Nv. 89419

ELLINGSON, Dr. James B.
Director of Secondary Educ.
State Board of Educ.
Salem, Or. 97301

ENGLAND, Bob
Director, Coteau Hills Resource Center
Ellendale, N.D. 58436

EXNER, Vernon
Supt. Blaine County Schools
District No. 61
Hailey, Id. 83333

FAUGHT, Frank J.
Gilliam & Wheeler County Intermediate Educ. Dist.
Condon, Or. 97823

FOLTZ, Charles I.
Executive Director
Educ. Advisory Committee
Appalachian Regional Commission
1666 Connecticut, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20235

GATTI, Daniel
Migralab
Mt. Angel College
Mt. Angel, Or. 97362

GEBHARDT, Joan P.
First Grade Experimental Classrm.
Old Fort School
Old Fort, N.C. 28762

GING, R. L.
Western Nevada Regional Educ. Center
Lovelock, Nv. 89419

GREENE, Thomas A.
Board of Trustees
Lyon County Schools
Yerington, Nv. 89447

HARRIS, George
Supervisor of Materials
Overton Co. Bo. of Educ.
112 Bussell St.
Livingston, Tn. 38570

HAWKES, C. Morgan
Box Elder Co. School Dist.
Brigham City, Ut. 84302

HEESACKER, Frank
Northern Montana College
Havre, Mt. 59501

HELDMAN, Dr. Lawrence J.
Catskill Area Sch. Study Cncl.
State Univ. College
Oneonta, N.Y. 13820

HOAGLAND, Carl W.
School of Education
Univ. of Massachusetts
Amherst, Ma. 01003

HYDEN, Victor
P.O. Box 265
Regional Center
Lovelock, Nv. 89419

JACOB, Nelson L.
Texas A & M Univ.
Dept. of Agr. Econ. & Sociology
College Station, Tx. 77840

JACOBSEN, Willard T.
Coord. Title III Action Centers
ESEA, Box 104
Woodstock, Vt. 05091

JAMES, J. C.
U.S. Office of Education
Washington, D.C. 20202

JONES, Robert A.
Maine Dept. of Education
Dept. of Educ. Bldg.
Augusta, Me. 04330

JUDKINS, Paul A., Jr.
Leadership Devel. Program
24 Broadway
Farmington, Me. 04938

KAVANAUGH, James M.
Cooperative Educ. Serv.
Agency #3
Gillett, Wi. 54124

KRAUSE, Mrs. Marcella
Educational Unit #17
P.O. Box 539
Alliance, Nb. 69301

KRAUSE, Robert
Sission Elementary
P.O. Box 291
Mount Shasta, Ca. 96067

LACOMBE, Vaughn
Maine Dept. of Education
Dept. of Education Bldg.
Augusta, Me. 04330

LEWELLEN, Bill
Superintendent
Mill City Public Schools
Mill City, Or. 97360

LISTER, Carol
Wewahitchka Public Schools
P.O. Box 97
Wewahitchka, Fl. 32465

LUTZ, Jack L.
Northern California PACE
Chico State College
Chico, Ca. 95926

MacDONALD, Dr. Mary Hope
NASEC
355 Lowerline
New Orleans, La. 70118

MARBLE, James M.
ESEA Title III-Mississippi State
Dept. of Education
P.O. Box 771
Jackson, Ms. 39201

MARTIN, Claude
Supt. of Mapleton Schools
Oregon Small Schools Project
Mapleton, Or. 97453

MARTINKA, Robert E.
Central Minnesota Education
Research & Devel. Council
531 S.E. Lincoln Avenue
St. Cloud, Mn. 56301

MENTABERRY, Barbara
WN-REC
Winnemucca, Nv. 89445

MURRAY, Otis K.
Dean of Students
Treasure Valley Community College
Ontario, Or. 97914

NORBERG, Gerald
Univ. of North Dakota
Grand Forks, N.D. 58201

NUANES, Constance
Health, Education & Welfare
Office for Civil Rights
Denver, Co. 80201

PATRICK, Donald L.
Montgomery County Schools
Montgomery Co. Board of Educ.
Mt. Sterling, Ky. 40353

PETRUCELLI, Ken
Durham Elementary
Durham, Ca. 95938

PINCHEIRA, Olivia
Pecos Independent Schools
Pecos, N.M. 87552

PROVINZINO, John
Central Minn. Educ. Research & Devel. Council
531 S.E. Lincoln
St. Cloud, Mn. 56301

PUGSLEY, Rex
Box Elder County Sch. Dist.
Brigham City, Ut. 84032

PURSEL, Hugh
Educ. Service Unit #17
P.O. Box 539
Alliance, Nb. 69301

REESE, Donald L.
Trinity County School
P.O. Drawer AH
Weaverville, Ca. 96093

RENZELMAN, Al
Haxtum High School
Haxtum, Ca. 80731

RHODES, Charles W.
Appalachia Educ. Laboratory, Inc.
1416 Kanawla Blvd., E.
P.O. Box 1348
Charleston, W.V. 25325

RIDGWAY, Harold, Jr.
Elko County School Dist.
P.O. Box 1012
Elko, Nv. 89801

ROOT, Robert
Gilliam & Wheeler County Intermediate Educ. Dist.
Condon, Or. 97823

ROUTH, Dorothy
Leadership Devel. Program
805 Peachtree St., N.E.
Room 571
Atlanta, Ga. 30308

SAVAGE, Robert
Supt. of Schools
Baker Co. School Dist. 30-J
Unity, Or. 97884

SCARROW, Melvin
Wiley Cons. School
P.O. Box 176
Wiley, Co. 81092

SEWARD, George C.
So. Assn. of Colleges and Schools
795 Peachtree St., N.E.
Atlanta, Ga. 30308

SHAYA, Tila
WSSSP for New Mexico
State Dept. of Education
Santa Fe, N.M. 87501

SISEMORE, Jewell W.
WSSSP
Capitol Building
Phoenix, Az. 85007

SMITH, Wilbur C.
Overton Co. Board of Educ.
112 Bussell St.
Livingston, Tn. 38570

SHUKLE, E. J.
Northwest Minnesota Educ. Research & Devel. Council
Red Lake Falls, Mn. 56750

SMITH, Orville D.
Teacher Corps
USC--Migrant Intern
Los Angeles, Ca. 90007

STAHLECKER, Walter
Rangely School
Rangely, Co. 81648

STEFFENS, Herbert R.
Coordinator, WSSSP
Carson City, Nv. 89701

STEWART, Lynn J.
Carey High School
P.O. Box 8
Carey, Idaho 83320

STOUT, Larry A.
NASEC
P.O. Box 5618
Northern Arizona Univ.
Flagstaff, Az. 86001

STOVALL, George F.
Siletz High
Siletz, Or. 97380

SULLIVAN, C. V.
County Supt. of Educ.
Claiborne County
Port Gibson, Ms. 39150

SULLIVAN, Mrs. C. V.
Title III Coord., Claiborne Co.
Port Gibson, Ms. 39150

SWALLOWS, Elmo
County Judge
Overton County Bo. of Educ.
112 Bussell St.
Livingston, Tn. 38570

WARD, J. C.
Tennessee State Dept. of Educ.
P.O. Box 74-A
Cookeville, Tn. 38501

WEISSER, Russell
Central Minnesota Educ. Research
& Devel. Council
531 S.E. Lincoln Avenue
St. Cloud, Mn. 56301

WERNER, Robert
LaVeta Public School
P.O. Box 85
LaVeta, Co. 81055

WHITFIELD, Mrs. Angelina S.
Wewahitchka Public Schools
P.O. Box 97
Wewahitchka, Fl. 32465

WINNINGER, Robert A.
Upper Midwest Regional Educ. Lab.
1640 E. 78th St.
Minneapolis, Mn. 55423

WILLIAMS, David
Wheeler County Schools
Alamo, Ga. 30411

VESTBY, Einar
Chairman, National Committee for
Small School Projects
Vijaveien 21
Hovland
3250 Larvik
NORWAY

ZIMMERMAN, Bob
University of North Dakota
Grand Forks, N.D. 58201

DEMONSTRATIONS OF PROMISING PRACTICES
FOR SOLVING RURAL SCHOOL PROBLEMS

A. The Learning Package - Vocational

In Hughson, California, much of the 7-12 program is individualized through the use of the learning package. The presentation will concentrate on the vocational areas, but there will be information also on the use of the package to individualize other instructional areas.

Mr. Bob Reeder, Principal
Hughson High School
Hughson, California

B. Instructional Systems

Closely related to the learning package concept, but carrying it to a more advanced stage through the use of single-concept films, programmed materials, and actual working materials, the instructional systems approach makes it possible for an individual to go through a complete instructional unit without necessarily having access to an instructor. These instructional systems have now been developed in the areas of speech, welding, plastics, electricity, physical science, advanced math, foreign language. Other areas are under development.

Dr. Chet Hauskin, Director
Small School Division
Northwest Regional Education
Laboratory (NWREL)
Portland, Oregon 97202

C. Individualized Instruction

In the Coteau Hills Project, several systems have been used to individualize instruction, using the mobile lab among other things. But, the principal thrust is the intensive inservice involvement of staff in order to bring about the changes desired.

Mr. Robert England, Director
Coteau Hills Project
Ellendale, North Dakota

D. Individually Prescribed Instruction

An association entitled "Research for Better Schools" in Philadelphia has developed a system for identifying individual pupil needs and programming specifically to meet those needs. This is primarily grade oriented, but the philosophy is certainly applicable to all grade levels. Program is presently

math oriented, but has broad implications.

Mr. John Dougherty,
IPI Research Assistant
Research for Better Schools
121 S. Broad Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107

E. ETV and Service Center Functions

This presentation will trace the development of the service center concept and one of the most effective educational TV setups in the nation. The center provides personnel to assist a number of districts in speech, psychology, remedial, as well as media services, which are typical of the usual service center.

Dr. Frank Cyr, Project Director
Supplementary Education Center
Rexmere Park, Stamford, New York

F. Computer Instruction Network

This project is somewhat unique in that it concentrates on instruction in programming for the computer and the knowledge about the computer and inservice for instructional staff, rather than the mechanical use of the computer in retrieval of data. To carry out this instruction the center has five portable computer boards, plus a mobile van to carry the classroom as well as an operating portable IBM 1130 computer to the schools for instructional purposes.

Mrs. Judy Edwards, Project Director
4924 River Road North
Salem, Oregon

G. Diagnosis and Prescription in Reading Instruction

This program builds on the concept of individually prescribed instruction, but concentrates specifically in the area of reading for lower elementary students. This is a Title III project.

Dr. Ethna Reed, Project Director
Granite Reading Center
Salt Lake City, Utah

H. Gaming in High School History Teaching

All the excitement of competition and practical involvement is brought to play in the use of games in teaching U.S. History as well as a number of other subjects. This is an additional technique, not the only solution, to make high school courses realistic and interesting to students. Gaming is a great motivator and has the potential to lay the ground work for extensive research, study, and practical application

of the stuff that makes history.

Dr. Jack Crawford, Research Assistant
Teaching Research, Oregon College of Education
Monmouth, Oregon

I. Human Relations in Education

This presentation will deal with the involvement of the staff and the community in the introduction of major innovation and change in the school program. In addition it will provide insight on the effective use of media and the impact of a concentrated Title III grant on a school district.

Dr. George Carnie, Director
Exemplary Learning Center
Box 236, Hagerman, Idaho

J. Indian Education Project

This project is part of the effort encompassed by a special demonstration school for bilingual students and many unique devices are being used to individualize instruction. This program will be of interest to educators, businessmen, and others concerned with rural education developments, such as anthropologists, sociologists, and those interested strictly with Indian education.

Cam Pfeiffer, Administrative Assistant
Roughrock Demonstration School
Manyfarms, Arizona 86503

K. College Operates a Small School

This is a rather unique project in which the school of education at Chadron, Nebraska, has taken over the management of the Crawford schools on an experimental basis. This involvement of the college will be of interest to those who are seeking practical ways to interrelate the services of the different educational agencies.

Dr. Harold Koch, Chairman, Division of Education
Chadron State College, Chadron, Nebraska
Dr. Larry Tangeman, Supt. of Crawford Schools

L. Micro Techniques in Teacher Inservice

This project effectively uses video tape equipment for teacher self analysis in rural schools. In this, teachers will be filmed teaching a series of micro-lessons to their respective micro-classes. The instructional performance then of each teacher will be reviewed by the teacher first, and if desired, a trusted colleague and members of an observation and rating team in that sequence.

Dr. John Codwell, Southern Association of
Colleges and Schools
Atlanta, Georgia 30308

M. Elementary Nongradedness

This presentation will feature slides and commentaries on the operation of an ungraded elementary school utilizing team teaching and multi-age grouping of children. Discussion and interaction will be directed toward a number of topical areas: elements of nongradedness and how they might be achieved; attributes of team teaching and how "open teams" contribute to the ungraded programs; identification of important ingredients for reaching individual children; and, some specifiable roles for the change agent and the teachers.

Mr. Dale Harp, Principal, Demonstration School
Oregon College of Education
Monmouth, Oregon 97361

N. Computer Retrieval of Resource Information

The development of a lush resource condition for junior and senior high school students can only lead to confusion unless there is a systematized approach for the retrieval of resource information. Santiam High School has achieved this by computerizing all of the resource information, whether books, transparencies, slides, tapes, movies, or whatever might pertain to a resource unit. This differs from computerized instruction but can be a very efficient aid to a teacher in a modern exploratory instructional program.

Mr. Bill Lewellen, Superintendent of Schools
Mill City, Oregon 97360

O. Mobile Instructional Labs

One of the very exciting devices for sharing of instructional staff among several schools is the mobile lab. This has many possibilities and a number of these will be explored in this presentation. Slides will be used to show the lab layouts for several usages, and the narrative will cover the lab's potential in the field of remedial education, guidance, computer instruction, electronics, arts and crafts, and other areas.

Sister Julianne Janes, Assistant Professor
Mt. Angel College, Mt. Angel, Oregon
Migralab Teacher

P. Patterns of Flexibility

Meeker schools have long been a model in the use of electronic devices and instructional and administrative techniques to program effectively for the individual. Slides will be used

to illustrate the use of the tape recorder, video tape, movies, two-way radios, and other devices for bringing the world to the classroom and for truly individualizing instruction.

Mr. Bob King, Superintendent of Schools
Meeker, Colorado

Q. Bilingual Reading Techniques

This presentation will depict efforts to effectively program for Indian and Spanish-speaking youngsters who have the problem of the bilingual barrier. This has been the major thrust in the WSSSP New Mexico and Nevada projects.

Mr. Merlin Anderson, Director, WSSSP
Carson City, Nevada
Assisted by: Mrs. Tila Shaya and Mrs. Olivia Pincheira, WSSSP, New Mexico

R. Career Selection Program - WSSSP

The Western States Project has an outstanding program of vocational and pre-vocational experience both in and out of school for high school youngsters coupled with a planned program of exposure to information regarding the world of work and career opportunities.

Mr. Russ Merrill, WSSSP Director, Utah
1400 University Club Building
360 East South Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah
Mr. Herb Steffens, Coordinator, WSSSP
Carson City, Nevada

S. Bringing the World to the Classroom

This is a presentation using slides and other visuals to relate a program using two-way radio communication, and development of the program, the development of student expertise, and the coverage of the problems and successes in initiating this type of program.

Mr. Chuck Clark, Principal, Meeker High School
Meeker, Colorado

T. Tool Technology in Rural Elementary Education

This presentation deals with the motivation of underprivileged youth and the development of an experimental background prior to the introduction of more formal instruction. This is being done through the use of small hand tools and craft involvement for pre-school and first graders in isolated communities in rural North Carolina.

Miss Elizabeth Hunt, Old Fort High School
Project Director, Old Fort, North Carolina
Miss Joan P. Gebhardt

U. Shared Services - A National Survey

A recent study has been made of shared services throughout the United States. The study revealed that there are many varieties and types of shared services. The study dealt with those having a particular bearing on the improvement of instruction in small rural schools. These involve personnel services, how to establish service centers, the use of mobile labs, itinerant teachers, itinerant students, the sharing of facilities, and the administrative sharing of centralized services. The study was made and this presentation is being made by

Dr. Frank Heesaker, Director of Research
Northern Montana College
Havre, Montana

V. National Instruction TV Library

This presentation will relate information on the use of instructional television, and, in addition to information on the availability of films and video taped materials, it will present previews of some representative lesson materials, together with sample teacher guides for coordinating the televised instructional program.

Mr. Wilfred T. Semrad, Associate Director
National Instructional Television Library
University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska

W. Seminar - Rural Life and the Nation's Survival

Although earlier presentations will dwell on the economic, social, and demographic factors of rural life there will be many at the conference interested in taking the long look ahead, with the possibility of helping to shape the things to come. This will be an informal seminar that will enable the participants to do some oral imagineering for the rural America of tomorrow. A brief initial presentation and the resource function will be served by

Dr. Frank Cyr, Director, Center for Shared Services
Rexmere Park, New York
Charles P. Haggerty, Director, Oregon Small Schools Program, Salem, Oregon, Discussion Chrm.

X and Y. Available Films

In the spaces designated there will be four or five films available for continuous showing on an individual or small group basis. The equipment and the films will be on hand and ready to be used. Anyone may operate the projector who has a wish to do so. These films are:

Charlie and the Golden Hampster--A Nongraded Elementary Program, I/D/E/A, Inc.

The Improbable Form of Master Sturm--A Nongraded Secondary Program, I/D/E/A/, Inc.
Answers and Questions--An NASSP film showing the boredom of a typical high school
Sampler Film, Showing materials available from the National Instructional TV Film Library

THE RURAL SETTING

THE NORTHWEST AMERICAN INDIAN AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

by Alphonse D. Selinger*

The majority of Indians live in rural areas under extreme conditions of poverty and deprivation. In 1967, unemployment figures for this segment of the population averaged between 45 and 80 percent. Housing on reservations was estimated to be unacceptable by any standards in 90 percent of the units. Average amount of formal schooling of Indians was five years.

Education has done little to help solve the problems of Indians and has frequently intensified those problems as reflected in the failure of psychosocial development of Indian children during early adolescence. In formulating instructional programs, teachers have ignored and not utilized knowledge of Indian child-rearing practice. To adjust to demands and values of the school leads the Indian child to alienation from his home and community; to not adjust exposes him to ridicule, prejudice, and probably a life of extreme poverty.

Between 1962 and 1968, employment and training patterns were traced of 50 percent of all 1962 American Indian high school graduates from a six-state area. A large number of high school graduates surveyed felt that they had not been equipped by their education to meet the demands of living in the post high school world. Five years after graduation these young people felt unsuccessful and had only vague plans to effect any changes in their lives. Most interviewees felt need for further training in order to obtain a good job which would afford them satisfaction. Many graduates were on their way to fulfillment in their educational experiences, but a large number felt unsuccessful and failed to take any pride in their accomplishments. There was a noticeable absence in the educational background of most of the high school graduates surveyed of factors which contribute to self-direction.

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*Research Associate, Oregon State University

It was found that approximately seventy percent of Indians graduating from high school continued into academic or training programs. This number was not satisfactorily high when the dropout rate in high school was 50 percent. It was also discovered that only one-half of the graduates who entered post high school programs completed them. Of those who did continue post high school education, the large majority were in technical and vocational areas. Of those who were interviewed, none were engaged in prestige professions such as law, medicine, or engineering.

Six years after graduation, slightly less than 50 percent of the females and slightly more than 50 percent of the males were employed. The majority of these persons were working in low-income and low-skill, nonpermanent types of jobs.

The most frequent reasons why females discontinued post high school programs were lack of interest and marriage; among males, lack of financial support and lack of interest. Economic status did not appear to be the major determinant in either entrance into or persistence in a post high school program. About one-half of those who discontinued an initially entered program resumed in the same or a different program.

Two-thirds of the males and one-third of the females accepted employment unrelated to their training. Most who accepted this type of employment did so because they wished to live on or near their home reservation.

After graduation from high school, the tendency of those who did not go into higher education was to move on or near a reservation and hold a job for approximately one year. Following this first job, the tendency was to move away from the reservation, frequently out of the state, hold a job for another year, and then drift back to the reservation. This pattern is repeated year after year.

The most important changes the graduates would seek in the schools they attended were better trained teachers and higher academic standards. These suggested changes reflected an awareness of the prejudice

of "low expectation." Told often enough by word and action that Indian students were not expected to measure up to achievements of the general student population, Indian pupils behaved in ways calculated to fulfill the expectation of those with prejudiced attitudes.

It is of primary importance that new programs emphasize the processes by which Indians can feel they control their own destiny and thus can develop a viable identity. Self-evaluation must be a major emphasis to complement experimentation. Teachers must learn to accept Indians as individuals and assist them in their growth to adulthood. Teachers need to know the cultural values and home life of Indians and become involved in Indian communities where they live and teach. They need to assist Indian children in developing high occupational goals and to teach children that the major purpose of education is self-development and not just a materially higher standard of living.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIOLOGICAL FACTORS AFFECTING EDUCATION SYSTEMS IN THE RURAL SOUTH

by Paul E. Kelly*

Major economic and sociological factors in the rural South are associated with a number of problems which affect education systems in that region. The area of focal interest may be defined as those states of the former Confederacy which lie east of the Mississippi River. Those states have much in common geographically, economically, historically, politically, socially, and educationally. Economically, the most distinguishing feature of that part of the United States is poverty or lack of wealth in comparison with other sections of the country. Sociologically, the South is characterized by the traditional separation of white and Negro populations into two cultures. Educationally, Southern states are less well off in terms of economic support, overall quality, and holding power than an equal number of states anywhere else in the country.

There is a relationship between the economy and the social structure of the rural South; this relationship leaves significant numbers of people underemployed or underpaid, and consequently underfed, undernourished, poorly housed, and with an education that is poorest in the nation. These inadequacies are due to a number of factors. First, there is the absence of a sound tax base. Second, in only one state, Florida, was the national average in per pupil expenditure exceeded in 1966-67. Third, the percentage of illiterates in these states is much higher than the national average. Fourth, there is a large discrepancy between white and non-white racial groups in the South in median school years completed. Finally, the low average salary for classroom teachers in these nine states is another indication of the prevailing economic limitation in the region.

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*Head, Department of Educational Sociology, University of Georgia

There is no longer the wide salary discrepancy which formerly existed in the South between salaries paid to white teachers and those paid to Negro teachers. There does, however, seem to be a significant difference in the preparation of teachers of the two races due to the fact that Southern Negro teachers are largely the product of their own segregated and inferior education system. It can be argued that preparation of white Southern teachers is inferior to that of teachers in other parts of the country and that, in some places, Negro teachers can be found whose preparation is superior to that of white teachers in the same area. Generally, teaching is regarded as a better job for Negroes than for whites. These arguments, however, do not negate the overall sociological effects of the prevailing attitude in favor of separate but equal school facilities.

Numerous studies have suggested the inherent inequality of separate educational facilities for the two races, regardless of purported or even demonstrated equality. There has been some effort in recent years to improve Negro educational facilities and to provide new ones where they were nonexistent before in an effort to avoid desegregation and, ultimately, integration. The principal problem fostered by the separate but equal approach is its inherent capability of creating and maintaining two divergent cultural structures.

In many places, owing to broad cultural differences, including social as well as economic differences, Negroes come to school less prepared than whites and fall further behind as they continue through school. By senior high school, significant numbers of Negro students are as much as three full years behind whites in average achievement. Compensatory and remedial educational programs are sorely needed. Further, considerable emphasis needs to be given, in all likelihood at the Federal level, to the problem of meeting adequate dietary and health standards not only for the impoverished Southern Negro but also for his white counterpart.

The problems of the South are not problems of industrialization and urbanization which have plagued the North. On the contrary, southern problems are for the most part rural problems resulting from

a lack of industrialization and urbanization. Problems of the South are lack of a sound tax base, lack of economic and employment opportunities, and absence of a strong middle class or union labor to support school, labor, and welfare legislation. The problems are caused by a poor, backward, and outdated economy, lacking mineral wealth and initiative spawned by opportunity or education.

At one time exploited as an asset, the Negro has become a liability. Posing as he does a potential economic threat to his almost equally poor and ignorant white neighbor, the Negro is feared, segregated, and the object of discrimination. Improved education for the Negro increases the threat. Fair employment practices make the threat real.

If general conditions in the South are to be improved, the problem of segregation must be squarely faced and massive Federal aid must be administered. The South has not the financial resources necessary to do the job alone. With integration settled and removed as a threat, the way will be open for the South to accept Federal aid without fearing the aid as leverage to bring about that which will already have been accomplished.

THE CHANGING RURAL SCENE

by Edward O. Moe*

Planning for future education in rural areas requires a look at present problems caused by inefficient planning. Part of the problem in many rural communities is that the populace in general has grossly underestimated what has been happening on the rural scene. Poor projections have been made of rural population growth (in 1946 an error of 17,000,000 was made for 1955). Today's knowledge explosion serves as the basis for the forces of industrialization, urbanization, and bureaucratization, which have produced today's society; it is within the contexts of these forces that rural problems must be conceived.

Industrialization, with its incumbent increases in new commodities, rapid transportation systems, and communication, has drastically altered social relationships between people and among groups.

Urbanization continues to concentrate population around large cities where jobs abound. An expanding array of opportunities creates a new life pattern with new perspectives. Population becomes more diversified with different ethnic groups, different races, and people of different backgrounds brought together.

Bureaucratization has greatly increased the number and complexity of organizations and groups. Interdependence of people in all parts of life and population becomes a fact.

By 1980, the population of the U.S. is expected to reach 241 million. Not only have the cities witnessed dramatic increases in population, but these increases are equally visible in the rural non-farm population. In 1920, farm people comprised sixty-one percent of the rural population; in 1950, sixty percent of the rural population was composed of non-farm people. This situation is attributed to increased agricultural efficiency and to expansion of industry and military

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*Professor of Sociology and Executive Director of the Division of Community and Urban Development, University of Utah

services. From 1960 to 1966, the net out-migration from the farm averaged 804,000 persons per year.

The rural labor force is estimated to be about one-fourth of the total labor force. White men and non-white women are most likely to be in the work force. Employment has increased in manufacturing, various types of trades and services, and occupations other than those of farming and extractive industries.

Regarding sex composition, there are more males than females in both the rural farm and the rural non-farm populations. The age structure of the farm population continues to be comprised of a disproportionately large number of people under 18 and a very small young adult group 18-34 years of age.

Urban dwellers generally have completed more years of schooling, with rural non-farm residents next, and farm people having the lowest educational attainment. Rural-urban differences in school enrollment in pre-college levels are no longer pronounced. Regional and racial differences in this respect are also declining. However, substantial differences in educational achievement do persist.

The rural farm and non-farm family income is substantially below that of the urban dweller. Two major factors seem to be contributing to this situation: earning capacities are low; incomes attained are below earning capacity. These facts mean there are larger numbers of people in rural areas who have low levels of job skills and who are either unemployed or, more likely, underemployed. It is also a fact that there are proportionately more poor people in the rural population than in the urban. Only on farms with gross sales of $20,000 or more is any measure of economic parity attained.

The most significant factors as far as the educator is concerned are that small communities have (1) a smaller number of children, (2) a smaller proportion of adults of working age, and (3) a larger number of older and dependent people. Small communities face four major dilemmas: (1) inaccessibility of the goal of success as defined by the larger culture; (2) inaccuracy of the portrayal of small communities as examples of warmth, friendliness, and hospitality; (3) the

illusion of democratic control and widespread participation in the real situation of a tightly controlled power structure operated by a few people; and (4) the illusion of autonomy and local independence in the face of high dependence on outside institutions and resources. These dilemmas must figure highly in educational planning for the small community.

CHANGE IN SMALL SCHOOLS

CHANGE IN SMALL SCHOOLS

by Everett M. Rogers*

Small and rural schools tend to shy away from change perhaps because they fear change might be too costly, or because they feel uncertain when faced with new teaching techniques accompanying change, or because they feel that innovations are inappropriate to their way of life. The dilemma of small and rural schools is how to bring change to their communities so that rural areas of the country can benefit from innovations that have been developed.

The times in which we live force us to deal with change. Acceptance of change and innovations by any one of our many and varied social systems means that other social institutions must respond. If students being educated in rural areas are to be able to operate in the larger environment, then rural school systems of the nation must be responsive to changes in the larger environment.

The change process can be described as a cycle consisting of five phases: invention; diffusion; decision; adoption-rejection; and consequences. The final phase of the social change cycle is often the impetus for yet further change. Classroom innovations depend, to a large extent, on educational researchers rather than on teachers, principals, or superintendents. The concerns of researchers are often incompatible with those of teachers, and new ideas go unheeded and unused. When teachers do create, they seldom subject their ideas to careful experimentation procedures to determine the effects on the learning experience of pupils. The abstract nature of the educational process makes difficult the diffusion, field-testing, and evaluation of innovations which largely result from research in the social sciences.

The link between inventor and user is probably one of the weakest points in our educational system. There are several reasons for

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*Professor, Department of Communication, Michigan State University

this poor communication. New ideas of resources are often lost in academic journals whose technical language is indecipherable to the potential user. There is a lack of communication about innovations between teachers who may be trying new ideas in their classrooms. Communication between schools about innovative programs and practices is limited. While the primary channel for information about innovations is print, few in-service programs and workshops are aimed at helping teachers and school administrators incorporate innovations in their systems. The classroom teacher is told about innovations rather than being involved in learning about innovations. Techniques which involve the teacher are much stronger motivators for stimulating an experimental approach to education.

Most innovative decisions in our schools are system decisions where the school system rather than the individual teacher is the decision-maker. The authority decision is made by those higher in the power structure and requires the functioning individuals in the organization to adopt or reject the innovation on the basis of the authority's decision. The contingent decision is made by the individual but only after the system has made an enabling adoption decision. The collective decision is made by a group of individuals directly or through representation whereby all members of the social system must abide with the decision of the system. Each limits individual innovativeness in some way.

Effects of educational innovations are seldom easy to isolate, control, and evaluate. New ideas in education often represent only small beneficial improvement over ideas that they replace, adding to the difficulty of evaluation. Because they are often inadequately tested in the field, inaccurate expectations for their effects are created.

Characteristics peculiar to small schools contribute to their slower rate of acceptance of innovation. Most small, rural schools have limited financial resources and it often costs more per pupil to educate in smaller schools. Change and innovation require money for both the innovation itself and the time that must go into planning,

training, and integrating. Faculties are limited in number, innovative tendencies, and environment. Limited staffing of small schools is due to such factors as poor or isolated living conditions, a lack of community interest in securing qualified teachers, difficulties inherent in small school teaching, and a lack of competitive pay scales. Physical isolation makes it difficult for between-school communication. Many small and rural schools serve minority people who place a low value on education, and the need to better motivate students is characteristic of these schools. Often student populations in small and rural schools are quite heterogeneous. Many small schools are located in communities that reflect apathetic attitudes toward the whole educational process. This type of attitude places the entire burden for innovation and adequate education on teachers and administrators.

Smaller/rural schools tend to be less innovative than their larger/urban and /suburban counterparts for several important reasons. There is little effort directed to developing innovations designed specifically for small schools. Innovations related to individualized instruction are among those most highly relevant for small schools, but rarely are those innovations tested in that environment. Diffusion of innovations among small and rural schools is left largely to chance. There is a lack of interest on the part of commercial, professional, and governmental change agents. Decision-making is often in the hands of an apathetic and traditional school board. When community norms and values are in direct opposition to change and innovation, school administrators must carefully plan to overcome resistance and gain support for their campaigns. Adoption is often left to the individual teacher who may not be adequately trained to use the innovations. The effects of innovation in small schools have not been thoroughly validated. Careful documentation and testing of innovations is an important aspect of the change process in rural schools.

Research on the diffusion of innovations among schools shows that the more innovative units are typified by larger size, greater wealth,

urban location, hiring and reward procedures that emphasize staff innovativeness, community support for change, and free-flowing communication within the school. Innovative teachers are characterized by cosmopoliteness, youth, more formal education, and greater exposure to mass media communication messages. Individuals in the position of hiring teachers should seek innovative faculty members having positive attitudes toward change. Recruiting messages that stress the importance of an experimental attitude are more likely to appeal to change-oriented individuals. Creating an innovative faculty with existing faculty members can be accomplished by providing teachers with opportunities to visit other schools to see innovative efforts in operation, by focusing conferences and workshops on the practical aspects of adoption of innovations, by rewarding teachers who desire to improve their teaching through innovation with financial incentive or other compensation, and by involving teachers in innovation decisions.

The diffusion of educational innovations is a slow process, and it is even slower in geographically and psychologically isolated school systems. Small schools can be linked to sources of innovation to facilitate a more rapid diffusion through regional meetings sponsored by coordinating agencies, roving laboratories with equipment and trained staff for demonstrating innovations, and "helping teachers" who consult with other teachers about innovations.

Although innovation and change take time and money, small schools may find it feasible to pool resources for innovations from which all the participants could benefit. Sharing the services of special teachers is one method of pooling financial resources. Pooling resources also makes possible the purchase of equipment (whose cost would be prohibitive for single small schools) if the equipment can be used jointly. Funds from Federal agencies and foundations are available for innovative programs. Some effort could be made to help small schools make the appropriate plans necessary to obtain such awards.

Since many innovative decisions need community support, community apathy can be a reason for a lack of innovation and financial support in small school districts. The small size and tight-knit nature of rural communities could facilitate open discussion of educational problems through group forums if a concerted effort is made to channel community support.

Many educational innovations require little financial investment, such as independent study, team teaching, and individualized instruction. Small schools lacking financial resources for change should concentrate on low-cost innovations. Educational research and development should focus on producing innovations particularly designed for the conditions of small and rural schools. To improve the rate of innovation in small and rural schools, change must be viewed as something to plan and manage. Change strategies must be developed as guidelines for the introduction of innovations. These change strategies should stem from a firm basis in diffusion research. A priority step for future research is focus upon the nature of change in small schools.

EDUCATING RURAL YOUTH FOR SUCCESS IN THE WORLD OF WORK

RURAL EDUCATION AND THE EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ATTAINMENTS OF YOUTH

by Archibald O. Haller*

The sociologist views occupational prestige as the key to assessing differences in occupational attainment. Occupational attainment levels are equal to achievement along the prestige dimension of the occupational structure, but this dimension is not identical to money income. Income is only one of the rewards provided by an occupation and is positively correlated with occupational attainment.

Two general changes tend to raise the level of the occupational prestige structure as a whole. One of these changes is obsolescence of old, lower occupations with the emergence of new occupations toward the top of the system; the second change consists of the upgrading of old occupations. Education is the main single variable known to influence occupational attainment. Thus, the higher the education level the higher the occupation and occupational prestige.

School completion figures, enrollment rates, and achievement test behavior indicate that non-metropolitan people, people of rural regions, and people of rural ethnic groups are the most poorly educated members of our society. Recent findings on the effects of different scales of environment and recent thinking on the individual process of attainment show a distinction between the "shared environment" and the "unique environment."

"Shared environment" means the variables describing the amount and accuracy of information which is readily accessible to all or most people in a group. Programs designed to improve education in major shared environments (regions, ethnic groups, rural vs. urban areas) have a better possibility of working than isolated efforts in limited areas. The "unique environment" refers to those parts of the person's social environments which vary from individual to individual and account for individual differences in behavior. "Significant others"

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*Professor of Rural Sociology, University of Wisconsin

in the process of attainment are those whose judgment and actions the individual respects. Significant others in the unique environment either influence the youngster because they tell him something about himself and his options, or they provide examples for the youth.

Recommendations for action include: (1) a single, over-all, long-range educational policy for rural regions, rural ethnic groups, and rural peripheries of urban areas, with special emphasis for different regions and ethnic groups; (2) more attention should be paid to the influence of significant others on youths' aspirations, attitudes to learning, and goals; and (3) ways should be designed and resources found to teach large numbers of people to utilize the motivational and informational potentials that already exist or could be brought into existence in the environment of the individual youth.

THE PROBLEM AS I SEE IT

Manpower-Development Services and The People of Rural Communities

by Francis A. Gregory*

In holding resolutely to its belief that the economy of the Nation can support full employment for its citizens, the Government of the United States is obliged continuously to assume a residual role in supplying those services needed for optimum manpower development and utilization that fail to emerge in the regular operation of the agencies and institutions of the states, cities, towns, and rural communities. The last few years have witnessed the development of a remarkable array of federally sponsored manpower programs, many of which are designed to aid the youth of the country prepare for and find work opportunities that hold promise of upward movement, not only in terms of income but also in terms of broader life objectives.

It is fairly apparent that youth in sparsely settled areas have not received a fair share of the benefits of these Federal programs. Barriers to adequate delivery of the necessary services to these young people arise from the remoteness and dispersion of the people, and the uncertainties and diversities of their respective economies. One-fifth of the total rural population lives in poverty, according to the Office of Economic Opportunity. Too many rural people suffer not only from inadequate or marginal income but also from poor or severely limited housing, educational facilities, health services and medical facilities, and social and cultural activities. Among these disadvantaged are Negro families of the South, white families of Appalachia, Spanish American families of the Southwest, and Indian families on and off reservations.

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*Special Assistant to the Associate Manpower Administrator, Manpower Administration, U.S. Department of Labor

The realities of the economy of most rural areas further compound manpower problems. Between 1950 and 1960, there was a net loss of 390,000 jobs in rural America. The major factor in this loss is steady decline of farm employment, accompanied by a steady flow of persons of working age from rural to urban labor markets. Young people have been leaving the farms to seek their fortunes, fleeing an economy that cannot supply employment opportunities to meet their needs, and a social setting that offers less than fulfillment.

The immediate problem, then, is to make the presently irreversible rural to urban migration a more reasoned and efficient process. The first phase of the undertaking should include: (1) improved public education programs; (2) an improved information system on employment opportunities and outlooks; (3) expanded vocational counseling and guidance services; (4) greatly expanded and improved programs and facilities for the preparation of youth and adults for initial employability and for retraining; and (5) more effective ways to help city-bound migrants make the move, find a suitable job, and adjust to the new environment.

The second task must include economic and technical assistance to rural communities to help them attract their share of the type of industry that traditionally hugs the urban centers; develop natural economic resources of rural areas such as those suitable for recreation and conservation; and assist small farm operators to increase their efficiency in agriculture and develop supplementary sources of income.

Recently enacted legislation offers manpower-related services to rural residents. Increased Federal funds and flexibility, provided for in the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968, are intended to increase types, range, quality, quantity, and geographic spread of vocational education programs in rural areas, thus opening the way to establishing a greater relevance between job goals and preparation. Since the passage of the Manpower Development and Training Act in 1962, it is estimated that over 80 thousand rural youth have participated in its training programs, with an expenditure of over 100 million dollars. Almost half of the Neighborhood Youth Corps Programs have

been located in rural areas, with enrollments amounting to approximately one-third of the total.

A variety of pilot and demonstration projects have been undertaken to find better ways to deliver manpower-development services to rural communities. Among these are the "Concerted Services Approach," which is a multi-agency effort to supply numerous comprehensive services.

Another example is the Concentrated Employment Program (CEP) of the Department of Labor which attempts to combine a variety of work experience and training programs. Finally, the Manpower Administration of the Department of Labor, through its State Employment Agencies is trying to extend the Cooperative School Program to schools in sparsely populated areas by expanding its outreach services. It hopes to accomplish this by establishing itinerant service points, setting up mobile units, and increasing regular visitation by counseling personnel to the rural schools.

The total range of the Federal effort, of which the programs mentioned briefly are a part, to help the people of rural America make the right decision and to ease their transition between the phases of their lives, can only be looked upon as a fair start on the solution of a problem vital to the welfare of the Nation.

A PROPOSED STRATEGY FOR AN ATTACK ON THE PROBLEM OF EDUCATING RURAL YOUTH FOR THE WORLD OF WORK

A first step in a proposed solution strategy for an attack on the general problem of educating youth for success in the world of work is the identification of the component sub-areas within the general problem. Some of these sub-areas might well be

1. Semantic Hang-Ups

   What is the appropriate terminology?

   Is it the "world of work"?

   Is it "vocational-technical education"?

   Is it "occupational education"?

2. Utilization of Knowledge and Research About the Influence of "Significant Others"

   Dr. Haller in his presentation identified these "significant others" as family, school, community decision-makers, and peer groups.

   The members of Task Force A felt (1) that when the influence of significant others is discernible, the degree of influence of each significant other should be determined for each individual pupil, and (2) that when there appears to be no observable influence by these significant others, the community through its schools and other agencies should provide a method for determining and developing this influence for each individual pupil.

3. Lack of Occupationally Relevant Information

   The educational service of schools in general and the guidance service of schools in particular have a noticeable limitation in this connection.

   Occupationally relevant information should be made available to pupils at a much earlier age, school, and experience level than is common now. Certainly, the later

years of what is traditionally known as the elementary school period is not too early.

Making available this occupationally relevant information necessitates an expanded, if not a new, guidance service role for both the classroom teacher and the guidance specialist.

4. Lack of Resources in Sufficient Quantity to Provide Adequate Training in a Wide Selection of Areas

Sufficient funds, well-trained personnel, and a positive climate of "world of work" receptivity are priority concerns.

5. Lack of Projective Techniques Sufficiently in Advance for Establishing Needs

6. Failure to Stimulate Demand in Rural Areas

For instance, more women in the labor force are needed. Another instance is need for more representation in the labor force of Indians, Spanish-speaking Americans, Blacks, and Puerto Ricans.

7. Inability to Make the Mobility Decision a Rational One

The intention is neither to state nor imply that there should be a structured design to keep youth in rural areas. This problem approach attempts to make the mobility decision more rational and more related to "world of work" realities of the community and to needs and abilities of youth.

8. Difficulty in Up-Dating Parent and Adult Awareness of Occupational Choices and Needs

The influence of parents and of adults (as members of the significant others group) is so great that parental and adult knowledge about the world of work must be kept in line with the times.

9. Necessity for Preparing and Retreading Teachers to Present the World of Work Fairly and Effectively

Again it should be emphasized that this need points up the importance of the guidance role of both classroom teachers and guidance specialists.

10. Difficulty in Raising Adult Receptivity to Education

The success of today's rural youth in the world of work is noticeably related to the attitude of rural adult citizenry towards formal education.

11. Enhancement of the Rural Child's Self-Image in the World of Work

IMPROVING OPPORTUNITIES IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

THE POLITICAL ASPECTS OF SMALL TOWN AND RURAL SCHOOLS

by Frieda L. Gehlen*

Schools, as creatures of the state and supported by tax monies, are political and find themselves the object of political pressure from groups of local citizens and local chapters of national pressure groups. The state and nation exert political pressure in the form of financial inducements and restrictive requirements.

While pressures such as these are not to be ignored, many argue that the real locus of power rests in the power structure of the community. Studies such as Hunter's Community Power Structure and the Lynds' study of Middletown define the power structure as an invisible government made up of economically dominant members who make decisions and pass on responsibility for instituting those decisions to a second level of power made up of lesser economic people, professionals, and public political figures. A number of studies document the existence of fairly monolithic power structures. Critics of this idea argue that the Hunter methodology fails to separate the potential for power, the reputation of having power, and the actual exercise of power. The pluralists suggest that there must be analysis of several specific issues in the community noting who actually exercises power in a given situation. Issue analysis has generally found that different people and groups are decision-makers, although there is some overlapping of interests.

The type of power structure of a community may be related to factors such as size of community or past tradition of political involvement. No matter what the methodology used and the basic assumptions made, no study has found a really widespread distribution of power. The school superintendent is seldom seen as having a power base of his own. Literature on community power has seldom concerned itself with public education at all.

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*Assistant Professor of Sociology, Purdue University

Mass communications, transportation, and the increasing authority of the state tie the community into the larger community of the nation. The balance of power in legislative bodies is shifting away from rural domination. Urban immigration of young adults leaves in the rural community a composition of older, farm-oriented adults and nonfarm residents with urban employment and attitudes. Suburban migration is likely to change the complexion of the small town faster than out-migration. The power structure is such that in many areas of concern the major decisions are made at a higher level than the local community.

School districts are not necessarily coterminous with other political subdivisions. Many small districts find it more feasible economically to pay tuition for high school students to schools in neighboring districts. In cases such as these, power arrangements will differ. Characteristics of rural or small town schools are fairly small classes, limited range of subject offerings, and few teachers as a result of a limited population base. The tax picture reinforces the generally conservative orientation of the community.

The small school faculty can be expected to be politically and educationally conservative, resulting from hiring teachers with values and habits in line with those of the community, hiring teachers originally from the local community, and from the fact that few urban-background teachers choose to teach in small, rural schools. Teachers seldom fill leadership roles outside the school due to their role as "neutral" citizens and to a lack of prestige in that salary schedules are apt to be low and teacher turnover is apt to be high.

Unique functions of the rural school are that (1) it has widespread contact within the community as a symbol of community enterprise and pride and (2) its facilities often serve as a community center for social, political, and sometimes religious activities. For most rural schools, the student population will be homogeneous in background and values. The more homogeneous the community, the less conflict or controversy will occur involving the school. The

power struggle is less apt to be the local minority versus the power structure and more apt to be the small community versus the larger society.

Controversial areas in which conflict would be likely are changes that would demand more money, changes in the curriculum that deal with value-laden subjects, and consolidation which would involve loss of the local school. The small, rural school is expected to act as a transmitter of the values of traditional, conservative America and should do so without raising the tax burden. Similarities in the values of school leadership and leadership of the community reduce likelihood of open conflict.

The literature would suggest that the power structure is likely to take a hands-off policy and let various community factions decide noneconomic issues. If the issue is an economic one, the power structure is more apt to decide the issue independent of public debate.

Some basic aspects of the small community make likely certain patterns of action in resolving conflicts over introduction of change. The informal communications network provides a chance for resolution at the informal level. Other resources available for resolution or prevention of conflict in the small, rural community are the image of the superintendent and staff and the politically conservative philosophy itself which includes a high emphasis on law-abiding as a value even when one disagrees with the law. A respect for expertise also characteristic of a conservative philosophy may allow the school official to convince a community to accept an unwanted change.

THE PROBLEM AS I SEE IT

by Henry Taylor*

Problems in rural communities stem from the steady downtrend of employment in agriculture, forestry, and mining, while gains in non-farm industries have not been sufficient to offset this decline and provide jobs for a growing rural labor force. There is an increasing deficit of talent in rural areas due to urban migration. This drain is not being offset by adequate development of human resources in rural areas. The overall strategy to cope with these problems must be (1) to improve the capability of the rural work force to compete successfully for jobs including new careers, and (2) to create more jobs in rural areas and in small and intermediate communities.

One of the most potentially useful resources for development of talent is the New Careers Program--the development of service-to-people kinds of occupations. Money to pay training costs can follow an individual up a ladder of achievement. There is a lack of opportunity for rural youth for work experiences that lead to fulfilling careers without leaving home. Youths need a chance to commit themselves to something in which they have a sense of pride and worthwhile accomplishment. Youth involvement can be accomplished by community development teams based on volunteer service and training, with paid employment resulting.

Employers in commercial agriculture are painfully aware of the need for better labor management. Educational work in this field is being requested by employers at an accelerating rate. Employers in agriculture must compete for labor with industry and, at the same time, so manage labor as to make its employment profitable.

Amendments in 1966 and 1967 to the Fair Labor Standards Act prohibited employment of youths under 16 years of age in hazardous

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*Program Assistant to the Administrator of the Rural Community Development Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture

agricultural occupations. Exemption was secured for students of vocational agriculture while employed in connection with their instruction and for youths 14 and 15 years old involved in 4-H training programs. An estimated 10,000 youths have been trained to operate farm machinery under these programs.

Federal agencies such as the Rural Electrification Administration, Soil Conservation Service districts, and the Farmers Home Administration are important vehicles for improving opportunities in rural areas. As a result of projects of these agencies, needs for technicians and skilled repairmen will continue to rise, thus imposing continuing demands on education. Technical Action Panels, composed of representatives of agencies under the Department of Agriculture, have been effective in helping local groups achieve community goals.

Rural communities can be improved by determining what they want from the human standpoint in terms of size, population, and industrial concentration, and from a dollar value in terms of the cost of public services to differing intensities and patterns of concentration. This approach calls for people to organize and plan for full development of community resources on a county or multi-county basis. Through comprehensive planning, greater community facilities and improved educational and job training programs can be provided.

PROVIDING QUALITY INSTRUCTION IN SMALL RURAL SCHOOLS

PROVIDING QUALITY INSTRUCTION IN SMALL RURAL SCHOOLS

The Problem As I See It

Dr. William Ward of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory discussed improving rural teachers' competencies, and proposed a four-part plan for doing so:

1. identify the desired pupil outcomes;
2. identify the conditions that bring out these desired pupil outcomes;
3. identify the necessary teacher competencies to achieve the desired pupil outcomes; and
4. identify the necessary conditions to bring out these teacher competencies.

Dr. Alden Lilliewhite, Deputy Associate Director of the Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education of USOE, talked about the Federal resources that are currently being made available for funding programs to implement solutions to problems in rural areas.

How May The Problem Of Providing Quality Instruction Be Attacked In Small Rural Schools?

The entire session divided into smaller groups, and decided upon four problems relevant to rural areas. The problems follow:

GROUP 1: What should be the roles of a teacher in a small, rural school with respect to the following: bureaucracy, cooperation and communication with other educators, attitudes toward change, and pre- and in-service training?

GROUP 2: Self-identification, identification of the power structure, and identification of how to cope with the power structure (inter- and intra-personal understandings--affective domain).

GROUP 3: How to improve the competencies of teaching and learning in rural schools.

GROUP 4: What can I, as a teacher, do to help implement the type of program our staff and community have agreed to develop?

Task Force C reconvened and defined more precisely a problem for rural areas: Children in rural areas are receiving inadequate preparation for a changing society.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

A Sample Problem Sub-Area Solution Strategy: "How Do We Enhance the Rural Child's Self-Image in the World of Work?"

The following is a suggested procedure for solving the specific problem sub-area of enhancing the rural child's self-image in the world of work:

1. Identify the problem sub-area, in this instance "How Do We Enhance the Rural Child's Self-Image in the World of Work?"
2. Develop and define operational objectives which have as much of the measurable element as possible, some of which in this instance might be
   a. to spell out clearly the measurable components of a rural child's self-image as these relate to the world of work, and
   b. to determine the "hard-data" and "soft-data" assessment of measuring instruments and techniques, which could appropriately ascertain the relativity of an employable strategy to an operational objective.
3. Develop and utilize operational strategies--some of which in this instance might be
   a. securing appropriate information in regard to the world of work,
   b. identification and utilization of significant others (referred to by Dr. Haller) who influence educational and occupational decisions of rural youth; such significant others include
      (1) family
      (2) school
      (3) community decision-makers
      (4) appropriate persons from the professional, business,

industrial and lay communities. (These may or may not be community decision-makers.)

(5) peers, and

c. development of a curriculum and related instructional methodology which are relevant to and appropriate for the world of work, giving the necessary regard (1) to such ethnic groups as Indians, Spanish-speaking Americans, Blacks, Appalachian whites, and (2) to the specific regional setting.

Suggestions for Improving Education in Rural Schools By Improving the Teacher

The process for identifying the curriculum of a teacher education program follows:

1. identify the desired pupil outcomes;
2. identify the conditions that bring out the desired pupil outcomes;
3. identify the necessary teacher competencies to achieve the desired pupil outcomes; and
4. identify the necessary conditions to bring out these teacher competencies.

Two of many specific inclusions in our proposed program are listed below:

1. make available to education-major students an opportunity to be introduced to practices in schools so students will realize what the functions and duties of a teacher are (this would be long before the student-teaching semester); and
2. make provision for the following teacher needs:
   a. External needs
      (1) Sense of Power
      (2) Self-confidence
      (3) Support

(4) Flexibility of mind
(5) Awareness
(6) Participation

b. Internal needs
(1) Training
(2) Practice
(3) Tools (both hard- and soft-ware)
(4) Skills
(a) Subject matter knowledge
(b) Communication
(c) Methods
(d) Human relations
(5) Time

(The task force would like to make it clear that this is by no means the only problem encountered in rural education; nor is the problem unique to rural areas. However, our assigned task is to define the problem and suggest solutions for rural areas; other people may do the same for urban areas.)

Suggestions from the Floor

1. Board member--teachers are needed who are trained in more than one field. This additional training would give a broader program and a better education for the same amount of money.
2. Twelve-month contracts would be very helpful for teachers.
3. Use of the amplified telephone would greatly extend (1) good teaching, and (2) curriculum.
4. Utilization of funds from foundations, Federal government, and states would be wise.

STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

by George R. Bandy*

There is a need for change in education, particularly in rural education; however, for changes to be effected without adequate regard for ultimate goals and purposes may be dangerous. Change is not supported for the sake of change.

There are a great many theories and models for change. There is also considerable contradiction in the use of terms relating to the change process. A perusal of the literature shows many inconsistencies. A common agreement should be reached concerning the definition and use of change-related terms.

Although the rate of diffusion of innovations in education seems to be quickening, it is still true that, in general, education has been notoriously slow in effecting needed change. One reason for this probably has to do with the domestication of public schools. Schools cannot choose their clients and the clients must accept the service provided by public schools. In such a stable environment it has been shown that there has resulted a lack of interest in change or recognition of need for change. Other suggested reasons why change in education is different and more complex than it is in other fields are: changes in attitudes of practitioners are usually required; innovations in education are often invisible and undocumented; and teachers often repress colleagues who desire to effect change.

Any viable change strategy must take into consideration both the external stimulus applied to the educational system and the attitudes and receptivity to change of practitioners in the system. Writers generally see the administrator as the key educational practitioner to be reached if change is to be effected. Some would argue that the administrator may be too precariously situated to assume the role of change agent. However, it seems that no matter what the degree of

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*Dean of Education, Northern Montana College

precariousness of his position, the administrator must be involved intimately in the change process if it is to occur.

A number of writers cite the need for an intermediary role between researcher and practitioner. Havelock has developed a typology of linking roles which includes conveyor, consultant, trainer, leader, innovator, defender, knowledge builder, practitioner, and user. Several of these linking roles pertain to strategies for change in rural education.

In contrast to the conveyor who simply tells "what," the consultant tell "how;" the consultant can probably provide important service in improving rural education if and when his services are sought. The trainer works on the assumption that a body of knowledge can be extended through an intensive learning experience; the trainer can make no impact on present practitioners in rural areas except indirectly through those who enter service in the near future. The leader, usually within the practitioner's or receiver's own group, can be either a "gate keeper" or an opinion leader; the opinion leader can serve as "legitimator" of new ideas which are to be brought into rural education. The innovator is the first person or persons to adopt a new idea within the system; rural school administrators who tend toward being innovators should be avidly sought out by those who would foster change. The defender, not in short supply in rural education, is the one who champions the client against innovations; defenders can serve a functional purpose of guarding against pitfalls of easy adoption of new ideas and innovations. It is contended by some that rural education has need for several categories of knowledge builders: basic scientist and scholar; applied researcher or developer; researcher and development manager; or engineer. Linking agents usually perform in a combination of the above "ideal" types.

It may be true that needed changes in rural education necessitate some restructuring and not merely simple adjustments in present practice. Reason and persuasion would appear to be better strategies than force for effecting change in rural education. There is some

confidence placed in the persuasive effect of a prophesy of how education will or should be in the future. Problem-solving approaches and attitudinal change approaches have been suggested as means of effecting change. Acts of showing, helping, involving, and training would seem to be better strategies for effecting change in rural education than would acts of telling or intervening. Change strategists would do well to emphasize logic, training, persuasion, and value, over compensation and deprivation, political influence, or compulsion. A cooperator approach which involves two-way communication appears to be more promising than a rational man approach which provides information through one-way communication or a powerless participant approach involving pressure and directives.

Mainly through the impact of Federal funds, such projects as Research and Development centers, and ERIC clearinghouses are serving in part as linking agents and change agents; but sophisticated strategies for improving rural education require training and deployment of change specialists.

Officials of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory in Oregon have developed some Needed Assumptions for a Change Process Model Designed to Diffuse Educational Innovation in Sparsely Populated Areas. The following list includes a number of these assumptions:

1. The need exists for an instrument designed to identify a variety of opinion leaders representing the total community, including any minority groups.
2. Effective training in diagnostic process and task identification is needed for opinion leaders (termed vectors) and for target sites.
3. Vectors need access to dual conditions:
   a. a community educationally similar to their own; and
   b. a community similar demographically, but where desired innovations can be observed at optimum conditions.
4. Vectors and educators of target communities need training in evaluation. Evaluation data must be accessible to the total community and understandable in localized lay terms.

The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory has conducted a study of shared services in rural schools in the United States.

Phase II of the project provides for dissemination of research results. In order to disseminate nationally to non-research audiences of rural and county school board members, small school administrators, state education departments, legislators, and community opinion leaders, a list of activities has been proposed which includes: identification of a five-state region of states; preparation of materials including brochures and fact sheets for advertisement; visitations made to each of the five states to identify leaders; cooperation in dissemination by identified leaders; and participation in conferences and institutes in the five states.

Change in rural education has been slow to occur. Attention to change strategies can hasten the process. Change agents should emphasize logic, training, persuasion, and demonstration of value, over compensation and deprivation, political influence, or compulsion. Hopefully, these motivating factors will suffice to promote needed change in rural education.

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CONFERENCE EVALUATION

by Edward Krahmer*

The evaluation for the NFIRE-ERIC Conference on Rural Education consisted of a pre- and post-design. Participants were asked to complete a questionnaire during registration period Monday and again during the closing session on Wednesday. Nearly half of those registered responded. There were 46 pre-questionnaires and 41 post-questionnaires returned. Since only 23 of the participants completed both forms, a comparison of change in responses over the duration of the conference was not attempted.

The results will be presented in the following sections: Reasons for Attending; Assessment of Conference; and Problems of Rural Education.

Reasons for Attending

Table 1 presents a summary of the reasons participants gave for attending the conference. Of the 46 respondents, 35 indicated they wished to learn more about strategies for improving rural education. The other commonly mentioned reasons also were concerned with gaining a better perspective of rural education and its relationship to rural society.

Table 1

Why Participants Attended the Conference

	%	F
Determination of strategies to resolve rural problems	38.0	35
Obtain information pertaining to personal interests	16.3	15
Gain awareness of the basic problems of rural education	10.9	10
Opportunity for interaction with other participants	6.5	6
Other responses	13.0	12
No response	15.2	14
		92

Assessment of Conference

Table 2 summarizes the most commonly mentioned "best features" and "those most in need of improvement." Opportunities for interaction,

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*Associate Professor, College of Education, University of North Dakota

small group sessions, and demonstrations of innovative practices were best features mentioned by at least 25 percent of the 41 respondents.

Table 2

What Were the Best Features of the Conference and Those Most in Need of Improvement

	Best		Need Improvement	
	F	%	F	%
Opportunity for interaction with other participants	19	23.2		
Distribute papers and have speakers summarize them			16	19.5
Small group task forces	15	18.3		
More time for small groups; more time to interact			14	17.1
Demonstrations of innovative practices	10	12.2		
Rogers' presentation	7	8.5		
Not enough time overall to assimilate everything			7	8.5
Adapt program more to entire U.S. or hold regional conferences			6	7.3
Obtained information pertaining to personal interests	5	6.1		
Papers presented were generally excellent	5	6.1		
More practical ideas; less philosophy			5	6.1
Other responses	12	14.6	24	29.3
No response	9	11.0	10	12.2
	82		82	

Some typical comments of these respondents included:

"Number, diversity, and quality of positive approaches to rural problems."

"Task force report and audience participation."

"Probably a better understanding among all concerned of what constitutes a small rural school."

"Clarification of various schools of thought of what some of the major problems of the small rural schools are."

"Interaction with persons involved in similar roles."

"Opportunity to interact with, and exchange ideas with conference personnel as they relate to my specific problems."

"An opportunity to talk to those attempting to solve the rural school problems."

Only two responses were commonly made to the request for aspects of the conference most in need of improvement: distribute papers, with speakers summarizing them; and more time for small group and individual interaction. Other responses appeared to reflect individual differences in approaches to learning such as the request by several participants for less structure, balanced, on the other hand, by some requests for even more structure.

Sample comments included:

"Presentation of papers which are just read should be deleted; mail out, let me read it."

"Speakers were generally very poor. Stop talking at us, let's interact and think!"

"Unless more time can be allocated to discussion groups, little can be done."

"Reduce time spent on philosophy of education--we know that. Get sooner to actual means of improving--like last session."

"Too closely structured, could not attend everything that I felt was worthwhile."

"More involvement of lay people."

"More <u>real</u> ongoing programs from the small schools presented here by those who are actually doing it."

A concluding question was asked concerning the overall value of the conference as a check on the assessment participants made. Over fifty percent of those responding rated the conference "highly valuable." All but two respondents rated the conference at least "somewhat valuable." See Table 3.

Table 3

Assessed Overall Value of the Conference

	F	%
Highly Valuable	21	51.2
Somewhat Valuable	18	43.9

Of Limited Value	2	4.9
Not Valuable	0	---
	41	

Problems of Rural Education

The most pressing problems of rural education as indicated by respondents are given in Table 4. The three problems mentioned by more than a quarter of the respondents both pre- and post-conference were inadequate resources, lack of quality education, and maintaining a quality teaching staff. Change in responses from pre- to post-conference appeared to be

Table 4

The Most Pressing Problems of Rural Education

	Pre		Post	
	F	%	F	%
Adequate resources, financially and otherwise	22	23.9	11	13.4
Lack of quality education resulting from limited relevancy of curriculum to rural life	20	21.7	15	18.3
Maintaining quality staff with so few teachers available who are aware of rural problems	13	14.1	13	15.9
Conservative attitudes of rural people to change	6	6.5	8	9.8
Other problems of rural areas	26	28.3	28	34.1
No response	5	5.4	7	8.5
	92		82	

in the direction of fewer responses to the first two problems listed in the previous sentence and more responses of problems otherwise infrequently reported. Some typical comments of participants included:

"Insufficient tax and population base to support basic services."

"Lack of adequate school financing to support a comprehensive curriculum for relatively few students."

"To have a curriculum program adaptable to the area that will be supported by the community."

"Rural communities for the most part are resistive to promising practices rather than becoming inventors or implementers."

"Obtaining qualified teachers who wish to stay in rural areas."

"Concept that all small schools are doing poor job."

"Making rural communities viable and with holding power for students and teachers."

"Lack of interest by U.S.O.E. [United States Office of Education] for 30% of our student population; at least in terms of proportional fund allocation."

Respondents were next asked how they would resolve these problems. More support by all levels of government was suggested as one way to resolve inadequate resources. Another way of solving rural problems, as well as a way to improve the quality of education, was reorganization and/or cooperative efforts. Pre- and in-service training designed to prepare educators for rural areas was the most commonly suggested way to

Table 5

Approaches to Resolving the Problems Presented in Table 4

	Pre		Post	
	F	%	F	%
Pre- and in-service training of teachers for rural education	12	13.0	8	9.8
More financial support by all levels of government	10	10.9	5	6.1
Reorganization and regional center, cooperative efforts	10	10.9	4	4.9
More coordination of national and local efforts	4	4.3	7	8.5
Redesign curriculum based on pupil needs, more vocational	6	6.5	3	3.7
Revitalize rural communities	3	3.3	5	6.1
Different instructional approaches and materials	5	5.4	3	3.7
Increased salary for working in rural areas	4	4.3	3	3.7
Increased involvement of business and industry	0	---	4	4.9
Other responses	7	7.6	10	12.2
No response	31	33.7	30	36.6
	92		82	

maintain a quality staff. Typical comments of participants included:

"College training and more local in-service to help teachers work more effectively with rural disadvantaged youth."

"Make salary schedules for rural areas inviting by applying a system of isolation increments commensurate with distance from headquarters, or urban areas."

"More cooperative, correlated efforts on behalf of Federal, state, and local governments, while leaving the central and controlling direction to the local school district."

"Formula for obtaining adequate facilities, supplies, and equipment over and above that normally allocated on a per pupil basis."

"Multi-system cooperative service units with cooperating institutions of higher education involved."

"'Walk' a district through the implementation of an innovation in the hope that the experience would result in a change of climate."

"Explore ways in which Government might stimulate agriculture and industry."

"More attention given to designing curriculum methods and materials to fit the needs of small rural schools."

"Through publicity campaigns, alert public to new potential of small schools."

"Establish guidelines of specific ways in which the rural schools and small rural community can work together to improve education."

"A consortium of institutions and organizations with the primary purpose of making information available to rural education leaders."

A final request was for a listing of activities that participants planned to implement in 1969-70 as a result of this conference. See Table 6.

Table 6

What Did Participants Gain From Conference That They Plan to Implement in 1969-70

	F	%
Involve to a greater extent all elements of the community	12	14.6
Use contacts made and visit innovative schools of other participants	10	12.2
Encourage school board to innovate	9	11.0
Change staffing patterns; motivate staff to teach with more relevancy	8	9.8
Work on linkage role	7	8.5

Find new sources of resources for furthering rural education	7	8.5
More communications; dissemination; public relations	6	7.3
No response	23	28.0
	82	

Community involvement, visitation of programs of other participants, encouragement of innovation by school boards, motivation of staff, and similar plans were indicated by participants. Some typical responses included:

"Look for ways to get community more involved in school improvement."

"Work more with community groups in developing school program."

"Plan patterns of cooperative problem solving in community."

"Visit some of the schools represented by people here."

"Follow-up leads for help--financial, consultative."

"Step up public relations program."

"Encourage local school boards to innovate and move ahead."

"Motivate the teachers to <u>try</u> to teach with more relevance, especially in regard to relating (curriculum) to the world of work."

"Change the traditional structure of the staff."

"Try to improve communications among our people and others involved in rural education."

Conclusions

Summarizing the evaluation for this conference can best be made by reference to the 51.2 percent responding a "highly valuable" conference and 95.1 percent at least "somewhat valuable." Another indicator of a successful conference was the numerous indications of activities participants reported they plan to implement as a result of the conference. Thus, it would appear that those in attendance were reasonably satisfied that their purpose in attending this conference was fulfilled.

The basic unfavorable reaction, not enough time for all activities from the paper presentations (which should not be read) to small group and individual interaction, was actually a compliment. It would appear, however, that future conferences should identify the instructional method emphasis in advance since most unfavorable comments seemed to be the result of the individual preferences for certain instructional approaches.